

U.S. COPYRIGHT OFFICE LEADERSHIP | APPOINTMENT ANNOUNCEMENT



William J. Roberts, Jr.

Associate Register of Copyrights and Director of Public Information and Education

Register of Copyrights Maria A. Pallante has named William J. Roberts Jr. to the position of Associate Register of Copyrights and Director of Public Information and Education, United States Copyright Office, effective September 7, 2014. The position is part of a reorganization designed to better align resources with mission-critical activities managed by the Office.

“The public today interacts with the copyright law on a daily basis, said Pallante, and more and more people are turning to the Copyright Office for information and clarification. Bill’s knowledge and experience will be invaluable as we seek to better assist the public and provide more innovative services.”

Roberts assumes responsibility for directing and overseeing both public information and education programs, including through publications, hotline and email services, and a variety of internal and external seminars regarding the copyright law, registration policies, and administrative practices.

Among other duties, the Office of Public Information and Education publishes the Copyright Act and other provisions of title 17, maintains an authoritative public website, and prepares a variety of publications including circulars, information sheets, and newsletters. The Office will have primary responsibility for maintaining the Compendium of Copyright Office Practices and releasing official revisions to the public.

“I am delighted that the Register is including me in her vision for the Copyright Office by entrusting me with the staff and work of the newly created Office of Public Information and Education,” said Roberts. “Rapid advances in technology have made these services more critical than ever.”

Roberts has a long history with the Copyright Office. He joined the Copyright Office in 1987 as an attorney in the Office of the General Counsel, following work in private practice. In 2005 he was appointed by the Librarian of

Congress to serve as a copyright royalty judge on the U.S. Copyright Royalty Board. He returned to the Copyright Office in 2013 as senior counsel to the Register of Copyrights, where he performed a variety of administrative and policy work.

Roberts earned an A.B. from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, and a J.D. from the University of Virginia School of Law. He has been a frequent lecturer in the field of copyright law over the years, including serving as adjunct faculty at both the Catholic University Columbus School of Law and the George Mason University School of Law.

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Congress created the Copyright Office in 1897 as a separate department of the Library of Congress. The Register of Copyrights serves by appointment of, and under the general direction of, the Librarian of Congress. Congress enacted the first federal Copyright Act in 1790 in accordance with Article 1, section 8 of the United States Constitution, “to promote the progress of science and the useful arts by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective discoveries.”